

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-12

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SUBJ RETROSPECTIVE ON THATCHER VISIT TO CANADA

REF LONDON 15191

1. DURING INITIAL CALL ON ROBINSON, UK DESK OFFICER, EXTAFF, EMBOFF RECEIVED FOLLOWING GENERAL INFORMATION ON RECENT VISIT OF MARGARET THATCHER, UK CONSERVATIVE PARTY LEADER, TO OTTAWA (REFTEL). VISIT WAS, IN ROBINSON'S WORDS, LARGELY POLITICAL AND EXTAFF OFFICIALS THEREFORE PLAYED VERY LITTLE ROLE IN IT. HE ADDED OPINION THAT PURPOSE OF VISIT WAS TO GIVE MRS. THATCHER EXPOSURE TO FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND FIGURES, A POINT MADE IN PARA 2 OF REFTL. ON STRAIGHT POLITICAL SIDE WAS A LUNCH HOSTED BY PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY LEADER STANFIELD AND ATTENDED BY MANY OF THE CANDIDATES FOR LEADERSHIP POSITION WHICH HE WILL RELINQUISH IN FEBRUARY. MRS. THATCHER ALSO PAID A COURTESY CALL ON ACTING EXTAFF MIN MITCHELL SHARP (MACEACHEN WAS OUT OF TOWN) AND ATTENDED A SMALL LUNCH GIVEN FOR HER BY PM TRUDEAU. SHE HAD A PRESS CONFERENCE AT WHICH, ACCORDING TO ROBINSON, SHE DID NOT PERFORM AS WELL AS CANADIANS HAD BEEN LED TO EXPECT. APPARENTLY, SHE WAS ASKED WHAT MESSAGE SHE BROUGHT VIS-A-VIS THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY IN BRITAIN AND SHE MUFFED RESPONSE WITH A FEW SHORT PLATITUDES. FURTHER, SEVERAL JOURNALISTS TRIED TO MAKE HAY ON THE SOCIAL CLASS STRUCTURE IN UK AND HER RESPONSES DID NOT PUT THEM IN THEIR PROPER PLACES,

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SO TO SPEAK. ROBINSON ADDED THAT THIS WAS NOT TO SAY THAT THE

PRESS CONFERENCE WAS A DISASTER BUT MERELY THAT SHE DID NOT
LIVE UP TO HER ADVANCE BILLING AS BEING FAST ON HER FEET.

2. COMMENT: WE HAVE IMPRESSION THAT OTTAWA SEGMENT OF VISIT
DID NOT MAKE ANY STRONG IMPRESSION ON CANADIANS WHO ARE NOT
IMPRESSIONABLE PEOPLE. THE LUNCHEES AND CALL PLUS SOME MEDIA
PLAY DO, HOWEVER, PERHAPS REPRESENT FAIR EXPOSURE RETURN FOR
THIS PART OF THE TRIP.
JOHNSON

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